

Facilitating an E-Learning Platform Beyond the Lectures: Digital Natives Become Active Learners

Amali Dhanushka Weerakoon (amalidhanu22@gmail.com)¹

¹ Division of Polymer, Textile and Chemical Engineering Technology, Institute of Technology, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.

Abstract

The traditional lecturing can't inspire the digital natives towards the engagement in active learning to succeed them in the university environment and beyond in the real world context. In 2004, Romiszowski declared that e-learning presents an entirely new learning environment for students, thus requiring a different skill set to be successful. In 2008, Markus stated that e-learning is a learning process created by interaction with digitally delivered content, network-based services and tutoring support. E-learning is also called web-based learning, online learning, distributed learning, computer assisted learning, or internet based learning. This study was focused to explore the impact of a poster exhibition project on the active learning of digital natives by providing an e-learning environment.

This study was carried out with Level 2 Polymer Engineering Technology students and four consecutive annual poster exhibitions has been conducted with four different batches. Each poster exhibition project was a one-month project. The students were grouped into 12 teams of 2 students in each group and each group had to prepare one poster after finalizing a theme for the poster exhibition project and the topics for the individual posters. The theme and the topics were selected to cover more than the 75% of the syllabus content of DPT 207 Polymeric Materials subject. In preparation of the posters, each group had to write a report in prior to create the rough skeletons for the poster by referring relevant articles including journal articles through the internet and each group was asked to email that report to the researcher before the given deadline. Through the constructive feedback the students had to modify the rough skeletons several times and finally came up with amazing posters. At the end of the poster exhibition project the students were given a questionnaire with both open-ended and close-ended questions. Descriptive statistical results reveal the facilitation of e-learning helps the students to learn actively, motivationally and to enhance self-monitored learning along with the collaborative learning.

By enabling learners to be more active participants, a well-designed-e-learning experience can motivate them to become more engaged with the subject content and further develop them as life-long learners.

Keywords: *E-learning, Poster exhibitions, Graduate attributes*